

In the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1-11 (Canceled).

12 (Withdrawn). An ink formulation comprising a marking component and a metal salt, wherein the marking component in the absence of the metal salt undergoes a colour change in response to laser irradiation at a wavelength above 2000 nm but not between 700-2000 nm, and the metal salt absorbs laser radiation at 700-2000 nm thereby causing the marking component to change colour.

13 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, wherein the metal is a transition metal.

14 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 13, wherein the metal is copper.

15 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, wherein the salt is a poly-metal salt.

16 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, wherein the salt is copper hydroxyl phosphate.

17 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which additionally comprises a compound including an oxymetal anion.

18 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which additionally comprises a colour-forming compound.

19 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which additionally comprises a binder.

20 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which is water-based.

21 (Withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which comprises an organic solvent.

22 (Currently Amended). A method for forming an image on a substrate, which comprises applying onto the substrate an ink formulation comprising a copper salt that absorbs laser irradiation at 700-2000 nm and a marking component ~~and a metal salt, wherein the marking component in the absence of the metal salt undergoes a colour change in response to laser irradiation that can undergo a colour-forming reaction on irradiation~~ at a wavelength above 2000 nm ~~but not between 700-2000 nm, and the metal salt absorbs laser radiation at 700-2000 nm thereby causing the marking component to change colour~~; wherein said method further comprises irradiating the ink formulation with a laser at 700-2000 nm, thereby causing the marking component to change colour.

23 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 22, wherein the laser is a diode or CO₂ laser.

24 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 22, wherein the marking component is a compound including an oxymetal anion.

25 (Previously Presented). The method according to claim 24, wherein the marking component is ammonium octamolybdate.

26-28 (Canceled).

29 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 22, wherein the copper salt is a poly-metal salt.

30 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 22, wherein the copper salt is copper (II) hydroxyl phosphate.

31 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 22, wherein the ink formulation further comprises a binder.

32 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 22, wherein the ink formulation is water-based.

33 (Currently Amended). The method according to claim 22, wherein the ink formulation further comprises an organic solvent.